Rock Valley College

Voices

winter 2001

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Winter
2001

Elizabeth Percell

EDITORIAL STAFF

Jeffrey Michels, Nancy Taber, Michael Spitzmiller, Paul Mannone, Eric Edlund, Andy Ryall, Todd Johnson, Jessica Roberson, Jonathan Hicks, Kevin McLeod

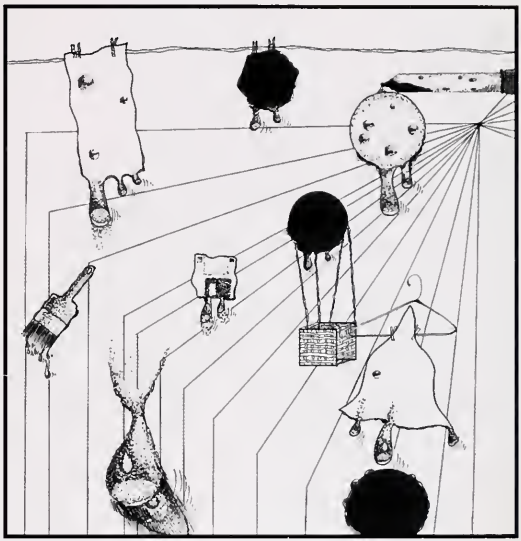
Cover Art by Elizabeth Percell

Voices accepts for consideration submissions of poetry and fiction, as well as artwork in any form. Send submissions, along with a short biography and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: **Editors, Voices, Division of Composition and Literature, Rock Valley College, Rockford, IL 61114.** *Voices* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited contributions. *Voices* is published twice yearly by Rock Valley College. To become an editor, **enroll in JRN 139 - Small Magazine Production**. This 2-credit course is offered every semester. For more information, call (815) 654-4489.

One-on-One Conversations While Driving Alone

by Paul Mannone

I try to think of good times we had
But nothing seems to come to mind
And I stare at the stars in the sky
As the tears bleed from my eyes
And when there's nothing left
To bring me home
I know today I must go
So I sit watching my memories go up in flames
Barely enough to warm my hands
Is this why we're here
To live everyday in agony
To walk the streets in fear
To cry to the sky tonight
And when there's nothing left
To bring me home
I know I should have left yesterday
So I'll tear my heart out and rip it to pieces
Just so you can't



Brooke Funfsinn

What happened to the piece of me I gave to you? Cause now everyone's gone, and I'm gone inside. Underneath this sky, I seem so small, but I ball (bawl) my eyes out just the same. I try to reason with my emotions, but it's unreasonable to have thought things would stay the same. I'm not saying my problems are worse than anyone else's, but they're my problems. Can't that be good enough! Two years from now, will you even remember our lies? All signs point to "not very likely." Hopefully I'll have forgotten you, and when I'm eighty years old, I'll have forgotten everything and have nothing to complain about (it must be heaven to be eighty). The phone sits silent, the door remains locked and I've tried to stay asleep for days. Wake me up when things have changed. Wake me up when we're not all alone. Wake me up when we've all gone to sleep (I think I'm a vampire). Wake me up when all the leaves are changing back to green. Wake me up when the nightmares start. Wake me up when the dreams are over. Wake me up when you realize I'm better than you. Wake me up when we're all the same. Like a puzzle missing the box, the pieces are here and no one knows how to work together.

NOTHING (IF)

Here I sit, the demented hours of the morning slowly passing by. The darkness lets my mind run, and soon I've lost it. The only pitiful soul left awake, the sandman forgot to visit tonight; maybe he never will. The bright black shadows twist and bend themselves around the darkness. Thumbing through my thoughts, I'm lost for words. I begin to talk to my closest friend, loneliness. I think of ones I loved, or did I? If it's so easy to leave, was there really anything there? I think of my friends, and I don't see them anymore. I think of my happiness, and that too has left me. I wonder if I'm really living when I'm this dead. The sound of silence is deafening, and I shake from the pain. Is it true what they say- ignorance is bliss? Or is ignorance only ignorance. And I open my mouth and speak, but I don't say anything. My pen rushes across the page, filled with a lack of words. And everything starts to become something else. The happy shapes come to kill. The monsters leave the closet and sit at the foot of my bed. Are they more scared of me than I am of them? Is this delirium talking? Is this my mind getting the opportunity to explain itself? So full of everyone else's problems, I tend to forget who I am. And somehow I can put down all these words without saying anything. If a man is sitting alone and no one ever comes to check on him, does it really matter that he's there? It a tree falls and no one is there to hear it, does it matter what it takes down with it? Stretch stretch stretch. The babble in my mind comes to form on the page. As I write what comes to mind, I tend to stop and wonder why I'm doing this. A desperate cry for someone or a calm whisper of selflessness. So I decide to walk out the door, into the street. And I pass hundreds. Their faces blank, no eyes to speak, no mouth to whisper, no ears to believe. This all seems to comfort me. So I continue to walk. Is this all in my head? Are these people really here? It must be real. They've always told me you don't feel pain in dreams. Or is that just what they want me to think? Have I been brainwashed like a brave new world that Aldous Huxley told me of. All the words of those so much smarter than me flood my mind. And I stop walking- something holds me back. I struggle to get loose. Hours, weeks, months. When I feel that I'm free, I see I've never been more trapped. So tell me, is it better to stop fighting, or die trying. Years go by and I finally see myself far removed. And there on what once was my bed lies the book in which I spent all those nights, days, and others writing. The cover open, I pick it up. Only to find every page empty.

– Paul Mannone

Fresh Photographs

by Lori Agostini

Conclusive
Indignant
Emasculate
Explicate
Every look
Every move
Every minute
Divided unequally
Slicing
Cutting
Separations
Animated
dimensions
Ladders missing
rungs
Parlay
Reservations
Lounges of Longevity
Dispense
Displaced dreams
Into documented
incidents

Kat Paluzzi

Vienna

Todd Johnson

Looking Around

Behind me
i see
things as
they once were . . .
i was younger
and had longer
time in which to refer
to my future
and my plans which may
or may not occur.
But now I see
ahead of me
that I have less
time
to confess
what has happened . . .
since I've turned
around.

– Bradley j Argyle

Brooke Funfsinn

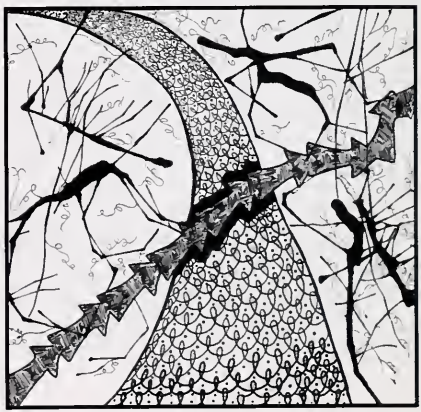
Life Is Artificial

Bleached hair,
Suntanned skin
in March.
Polyester, V-necked sweater
covering a chest of silicon.
Gap stonewashed flares (on special)
unexposing legs once plagued with cellulite.
Moisturized hands,
Nylon nails
clutching a slice of Butternut bread
drenched with what I CAN believe is not butter.
Eyes turned blue with Acuvue,
gaze through glazed plexiglass,
over the lush Barefoot grass
around the paved streets
through rows of clones
waits a colony of trees.
Beckoning.
Highest
Bidder
Please.

What Do YOU Think?

"Do I look fat in these?"
Sky blue doe eyes threatening me.
Which will you choose?
What if it's yes . . . insensitive bastard.
How can you say something so cruel.
What about no . . . liar,
You're just saying that to save your ass.
Which will I choose?
Door number one or door number two?
Or maybe I just won't answer, play
Dumb.
A triple-edged sword is poised at my
Neck.
Which should I choose?

2 Poems by Nancy Taber



Brooke Funfsinn

Sherry Pritz

Sherry Pritz

Ann Muehlemeyer

Karen Meadows

Ann Muehlemeyer

Ann Muehlemeyer

Sherry Pritz

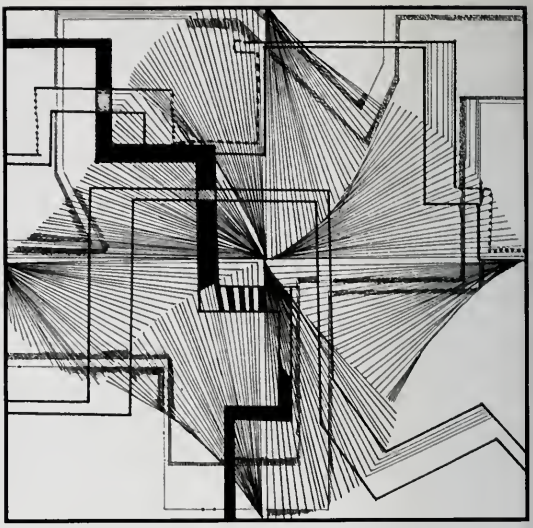
Stoned

Stoned.
Stoned by the sun and by the wind.
Stoned by the water and by the rock.
Stoned by the stars and by the night.

They entered the wilderness with their map and
with their compass,
and left with stories of secluded games.

The same ol' death games,
Like the hunter that feels no remorse.

Sacredly they rode,
to find out
there was another way
left undiscovered.



Brooke Funfsinn

Brooke Funfsinn

The Night Song

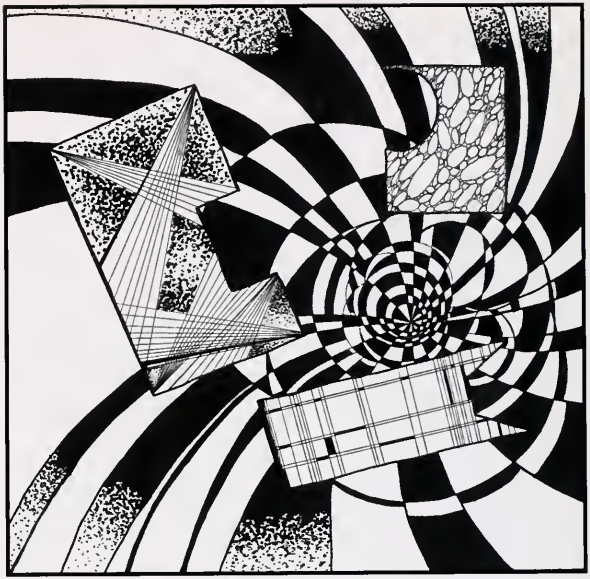
The endless night is here at last,
to deliver us from fears and past,
when you think the night is almost done,
the endless night has just begun.

Come on and dance with me,
the endless night will make you free,
run and shout, scream and play,
the endless night is here to stay.

Release control, relax your mind,
then you will see what you can find,
forget the sun, the moon is bright,
here we are, it's the endless night.

Return to Eden

Walking back into the Garden to set the
serpent straight,
They came across the crawling creature
just outside the gate.
Eve walked up to the shedding snake
and told him to be silent,
But, "Help me I cannot shed my skin, if
you teach me how I will get you
in," he hissed as a reply.
With creativity they taught the snake,
and because he did not lie,
He showed them the secret of vine.
"Drink of this vine and forget the
knowledge of good and evil, then
in innocence you may pass the
Cherubim's flaming swords and
walk inside the gate."
Hesitantly they drank and then they
walked up to the gate, past the
flaming swords, and in the
Garden they were once more.
Then they found themselves naked
among the trees, and shamelessly
they laughed and danced and
forgot about the time,
And without guilt they invented gods
and amused themselves with
stories.
Now the Garden is so full of life and
the serpent has new skin, and
crawls across the forest floor to do
it all again.



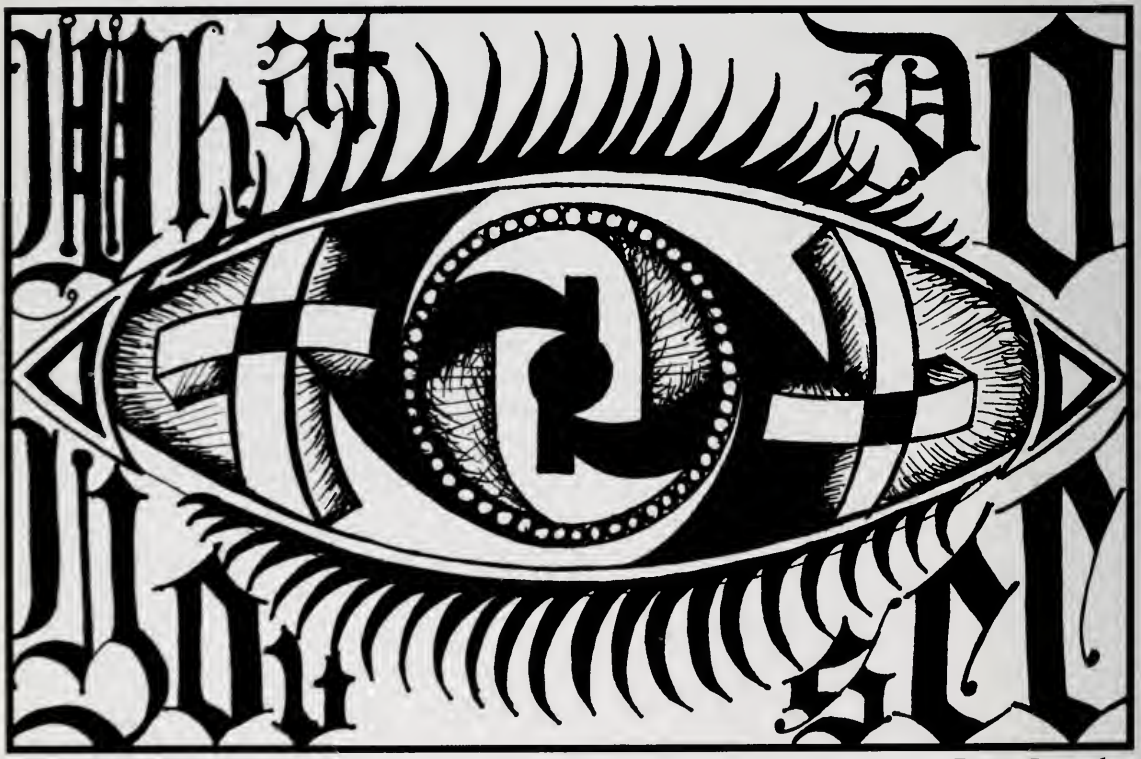
Brooke Funfsinn

How Purely Erotic Stems the Vein of Existence

Two lovers dance entwined,
their timeless embrace consumes,
the great rift of their divide.

West and East unite,
the bridge combines two halves,
and sets loose the world of our whole.

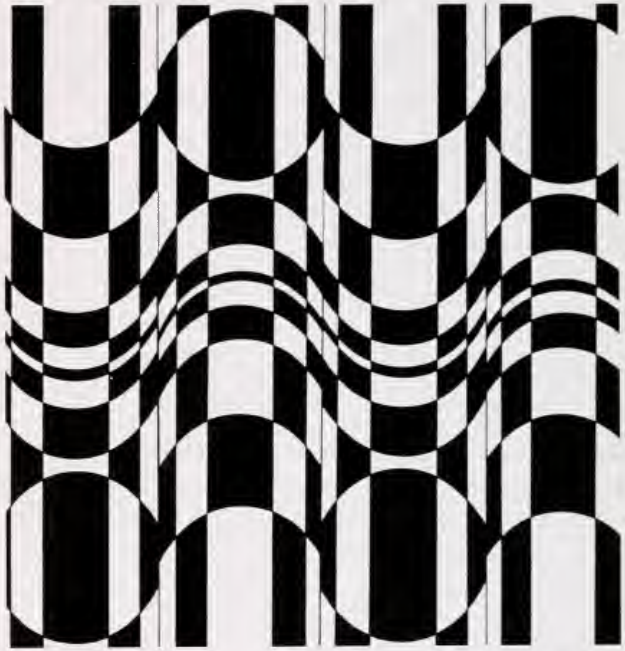
4 Poems
by Andy Ryall



– Brent Leander

Straight from the sky
To the tip of my tongue
And back to the air
The snow flakes down on to the ground
And my breath forms in front of my face
As I walk out to the cold
Leaving the warmth inside
Leaving my love with you
As I fall face first into my shadow
The darkness blinds me
And on this winter night
I finally see what I want
And I'm sure of what I don't
While I drive home in the cold
I remember how I got there
But can't find where to go from here
Stranded on the side of the road
No one will come by for a while
As this is the one the Frost took
And as I turn to ice
Your face melts me
And I'm just a puddle now

– Paul Mannone



Elizabeth Percell

she
purged her delicacies in the kitchen sink
(& with grief nudging at her innards)
looked up to the ceiling, with tired skin
down to the cellar with hounds & tutti frutti furniture,
then, in-between the layers
the aged jowls
failing

– betzi moore

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THE VOYAGE

Bluest of oceans carry my heart away . . . away from the sanity of life . . . or . . . the insanity of my own mind. Long days have been traversed by millions of wandering souls all trying to see the the truth. But whose truth? Truth that was dreamt about in the minds of others? Or is it better to believe the truth that comes from the heart? This is not a question of one person's ideas conflicting with another's, but more a question of the deterioration of society as time flows by. This is the way it is seen through these eyes . . . brown eyes . . . But not that it matters the color of one's eyes, for I can see the world for all its colors . . . but . . . it all seems so gray.

TOMORROW

Tomorrow again life will bloom
As does a child in mother's womb
Tomorrow is just another day
It will come and go but anyway
Pain and sorrow will be erased
and away society continues to waste
Writing slow but thinking fast
My thoughts swirl from future to past
Will it be another day of sorrow???
I do not know I'll find out tomorrow.

IMMORTALITY

Faces in the winding of time get buried beneath each layer. But there are a few that never fade, barely change, and always stick in your mind. These are the ones that change your life.

PHRASES

Reflection is just your life past.

Intelligence is merely a state of mind!!

My how flyith time when fun is being had!!

Incredible increments, Mildly mellowing, Finally finishing.

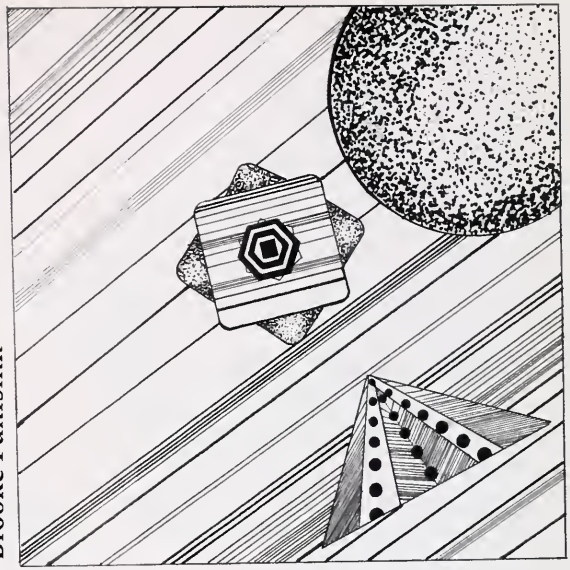
UNTITLED

Pierce, To put a hole through.
Piercing, This pain in which we all are consumed.
Pierced, My skin, My heart, and my soul. Searching for an answer to a question we cannot begin to formulate. Distress far and wide. Duress, the forced state. Is time running out? Definitely! Yet we cannot anticipate our own demise. To tally the lies forced onto us, Stuffing our mouths, our own dead weight drowning us in the frigid mass of uncertainty. Lost forever . . . Embedded in the forgotten memory. Push on !!

THE CRY FOR REFORMATION

What would you think if I poured
you a drink, not of juice but of a
common wine.
Why would you cry if I laid down
and died?? What if that was the cost
of humanity?
Would anyone see what they were
shown, That you could only use and
could never own!
Just try to believe in your own little
world and not in what I say.
All we need is a little more time to
get this whole thing right.
To advance our own into the unknown
Just to make it O.K.
Why is it right to kill and to fight
just because of our government war?
If not for a choice we would not have
a voice to speak out against tyranny
and the unjust.
Should we be silent and continue this
Violence?
No! Speak out we must!!!

8 Poems by
Eric Edlund



Brooke Funfsinn

SIR REEN

As the sun burns the fine mist off
the surface of the sea, calmness and
clarity elevate you to another level.
As you relax and all tensions cease,
you melt becoming one with the warm
summer breeze gently blowing across
the sea. Eternally traveling without
ever moving.

UNTITLED

Cast away your fears
Have an open heart
Try to keep sanity close
Don't let society tear it apart!

bud vase

bud vase
of glassy blue
holds a rosebud
holds it true
beautiful rose,
pretty vase
splendid
eyes,
nose,
lips
and face.

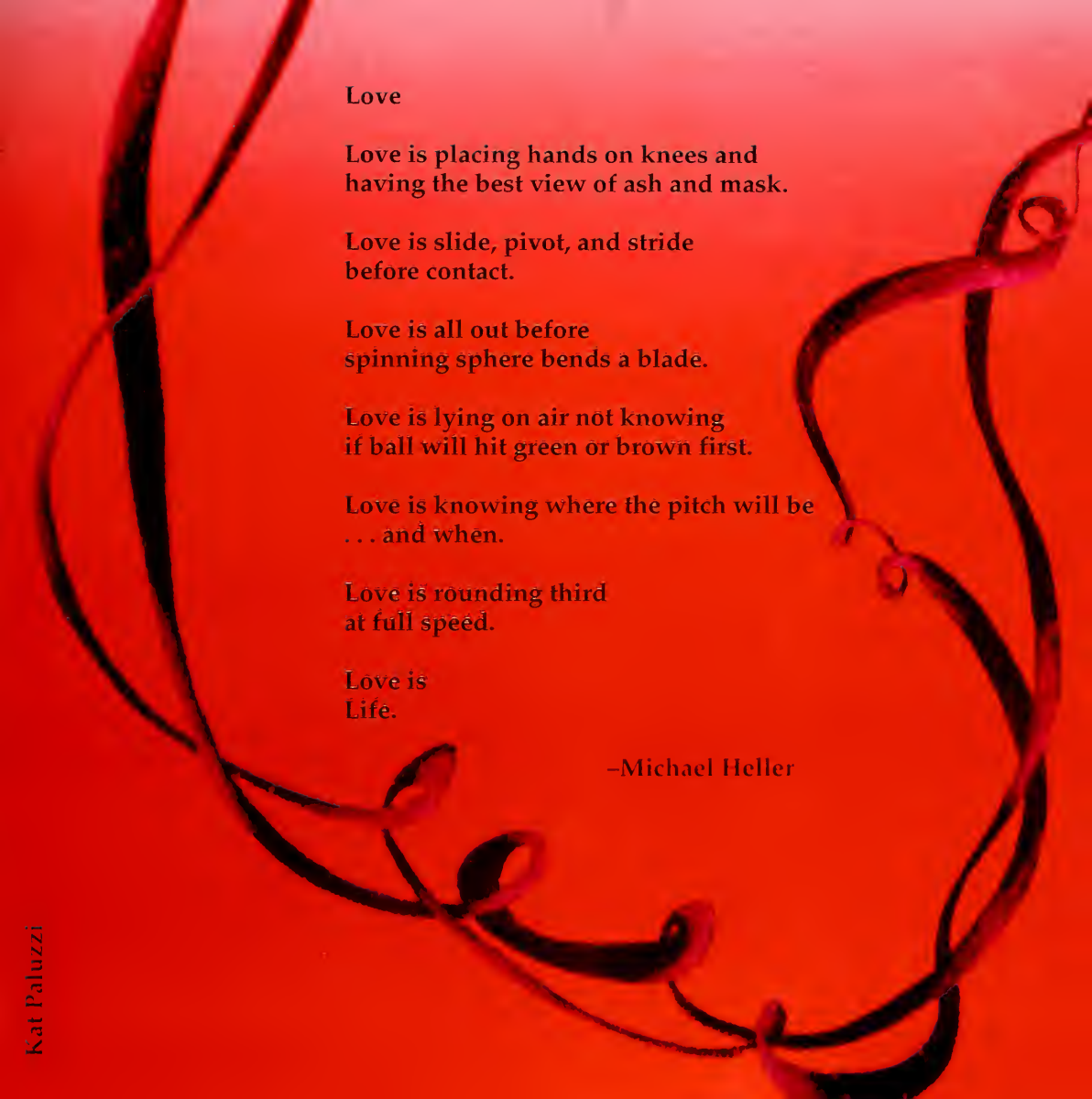
– Bradley j Argyle

Brooke Funfsinn

Jonathan Hicks

Jonathan Hicks

Anousone Panyanouvong



Love

Love is placing hands on knees and
having the best view of ash and mask.

Love is slide, pivot, and stride
before contact.

Love is all out before
spinning sphere bends a blade.

Love is lying on air not knowing
if ball will hit green or brown first.

Love is knowing where the pitch will be
. . . and when.

Love is rounding third
at full speed.

Love is
Life.

–Michael Heller

Kat Paluzzi

place your hand
on the back of my neck–
am i hot, am i cool?–
i cannot tell when my feelings are wrong
you'll have to let me know
you'll have to show me

wrap it in a box,
or leave it in a letter
as long as its been colored
with the paint on your fingers–
make it subtle
or make it bold,
but if you don't know
don't tell me at all

i'm here
where the leaves are falling,
you're there
where the sun is still shining

i'm going to stretch my hand out–
i'm going to slide my eyes shut–
i'm going to shake off this dust
that keeps these ears all clogged up,
and you will be a music box–
send me a tune, play me a song–
i will wait and listen for
the notes,
to touch my hand

will these seasons ever meet?
i cannot speak
but only think about you

– Nathan P. Mcdonald

Lump

Hadn't I always known
I'd find you here
Collection plate in hand
Catching melted drops o soul
And singing incantations
While bidding me farewell

Tell me, is it easy to take over
Mold what little substance is left
And shall I become that which you
want
Or that which you create
Merely for the pleasure to destroy
Tell me, shall I become at all?

Hadn't I always known
I'd find me here
A lump of nothing in your hands
Pleading to you -- the wax man
To make me something beautiful
To make me your something beautiful

– M. Cristine Andriakos

Interment

Latent reality unearths
Abandoned wishes
Left for dead
Through distorted hands of time
Caught in the crux of fantasy

– Lori Agostini

Todd Johnson

Culture Bound

Past the gag to freedom
We move
Shackled to the scale
Marching to the bathroom
Underneath a cream puff sky

Billboards lead the way
When esteem is not enough
Culture bound and dying
We self regulate our famine
We skeletons of beauty
We prisoners of diet

With dancing fingers on our tongues
We struggle to maintain
And caress the mirror -- satisfied
In love with who we are
Like men with paunchy middles.

– M. Cristine Andriakos

Chinese Letters

Turn Me On.
Who Knows
What Treasures
They Promise?
Tenderness and Tea?
Or Torture with Rope?
Say Something
Sexy and Secret
. . . in Chinese.

– Anonymous

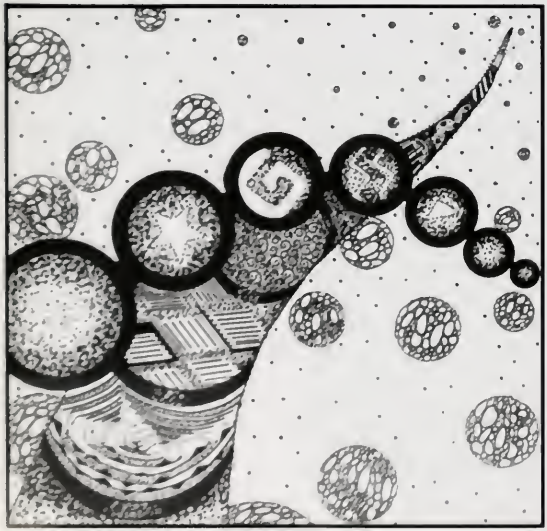
The Wall

It keeps me from you
That painted stubborn wall
To hold me from the view
Of seeing you fall
Off a cliff.

Shhh! Be quiet!
Shhh! Keep it down!
The bricks stop the riot.
Sometimes I'd like to drown
You in your bollocks.

You are the nursing bitch
You creep beneath my spine
Like a tonic you enrich
If only I could refine
Your corrupted intention.

– **Jonathan Hicks**



Brooke Funfsinn

And they wept no less

On my way there,
I met someones.
I asked who they might be.
They said, "Not who we might've."

"Whenever could this be?" said me.
"In a time or three," said he.
"From where do you hail?"
He said, "We hail not."

"Wherever will you abide," I enquired.
"Sweet," she said, "there's no place home."
Loved it more, always on the feed,
They'd been osmotized by the 'pede.

"Whatever for's life?"
"The rush to raging oblivion."
"What do you do."
And they wept no less.

So, I pondered the mystery.
What could that bad?
What mystery?
The Trundlecated Blues.

– **Michael Heller**

Jar of Pearls

The sable man came
To cry today
Another pearl
In his hand

I ran with him
Once more
Far away
From sardonic eyes
Ill wishes
Of the inhumane

Down the hill
Of emerald clover
Into the valley of the blind

-- Here --

His lips graze
my own
Free at last
To adore
To mourn
To weep
To touch
To drink

He leaves me
The moment gone
With only a jar of pearls
Each a moment
Precious -- stolen

A promise
Together
Separate
We wait
In famine
For the coming . . .
The Achromatic Age

– M. Cristine Andriakos

Anousone Panyanouvong

Contributors

Lori Agostini earned her AA at RVC and is a regular contributor to *Voices* .
Bradley Argyle is a student at RVC.
M. Cristine Andriakos works by day as a Human Resources Manager, and by night she balances writing and homework, housework, a husband, a stepdaughter and two cats.
Eric Edlund is currently attending RVC in pursuit of something else: truth.
Brooke Funfsinn, a second-year RVC student, aspires to be a graphic designer, and perhaps a professional singer.
Michael Heller studied poetry at RVC.
Jonathan Hicks is editor-in-chief of RVC's student newspaper, *The Valley Forge*.
Todd Johnson plans to transfer to NIU this winter, enjoys photography, and someday dreams of being a rock star. His photographs in this issue depict his best pal from out west, Julia.
Brent Leander, an RVC student, has never taken an art class.
Paul Mannone, an RVC student, answers: "I wanna rock!"
Nathan P. McDonald is an RVC student, interested in art, performance, music and comedy.
Bridget McGee is a student at RVC.
Kevin McLeod is an RVC student who plans to be a famous puppeteer.
Karen Meadows is the Acquisitions Assistant in RVC's library.
Jeffrey Michels teaches Small Magazine Production at RVC. (JRN 139! A great course! Enroll today!) He recently defended his dissertation to become Dr. Jeff.
Betzi Moore, an RVC student, is a regular contributor to *Voices* .
Ann Muehlemeyer works in the Technical Services Department at RVC's library.
Anousone Panyanouvong, now in her first semester at RVC, recently moved to the US from Laos. She plans to study marketing.
Kat Paluzzi, a student at RVC, is famous for being Vienna's mother.
Elizabeth Purcell, an RVC student and regular contributor to *Voices* , plans to be an art therapist.
Sheri Pritz is RVC's official photographer, and just generally terrific.
Jessica Roberson studies nursing at RVC and enjoys drawing, painting, and molding clay.
Andy Ryall, a student at RVC, plans to transfer to Southern Illinois University next Fall, or to travel the country for a couple of months.
Michael Spitzmiller is a second year RVC student who aspires to become a professional wrestler.
Nancy Taber is finishing her AA degree this year at RVC. Again.

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Brooke Funfsinn
winner of this issue's
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M. Cristine Andriakos
winner of this issue's
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meets
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4:30-5:45pm
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